

Stone, Mr. Dickson, and others, were all good."

Richmond's Hall was opened on January 25th, 1856. It was in the third story of the present Pascoe and Scurry building, and evidences of its early purpose can still be seen there. The opening was a gala event. There was an address by P. C. Gritman. Even then the story that the coal deposits were giving out was prevalent in some places and being used to Carbondale's disadvantage. He repudiated this statement,



FIRST TRINITY CHURCH.

and also that Carbondale was on the wane. Within two years, he predicted, a railroad would connect us on the north with the Erie road. This did not come true, however, till 1870. All the merchants were present at the opening of the hall, and a collation was served. The building was considered the most imposing in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

In 1858 a stock theatrical company was organized here and named the "Lyceum." At that time traveling companies visited Scranton occasionally, but never reached Carbondale. The Lyceum company was composed of Hugh McComb, Geo. M. Reynolds, Edward Clarkson, Horatio and Stephen Whiting, Edwin F. Joslin, A. G. Whitman, Hiram G. Blair, A. K. Fuller, William Love, Mr. and Mrs. James Lindsay and Misses Susan Glennon and Kate Miles. The wages of the miners were low then, and the times very hard, as the country had not yet recovered from the panic of 1857, but they commenced constructing a theatre. The second story of the present building on the corner of Lincoln avenue and Terrace street was rented of Harmon A. Chambers. James Dickson, foreman of the D. & H. shops, was importuned for the loan of some hemlock boards. With these a stage was built, and an elevated floor, with seats resembling the present circus seats put in. The stage as constructed was about 20 by 20, leaving an auditorium capable of holding 300 people. The sides of the room were not very high, and the slope of the floor brought the heads of the boys in

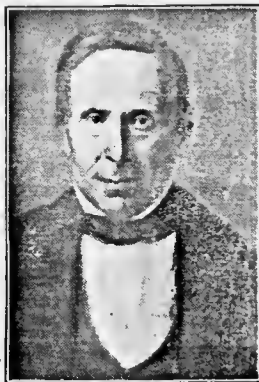
the rear rows in contact with the ceiling. A subscription was taken up for the furnishing of the theatre and was generously responded to. Scenery was painted by one of the members on muslin donated by the merchants. Everything about the theatre was constructed by the company, even to the properties, costumes, wigs, &c., used in the plays. Mr. McComb was stage manager, and as he had considerable knowledge of stage business, combined with his own natural ingenuity, they worked wonders. All was in readiness on the opening night, and the curtain was rung up on a crowded house, the audience being composed of the best people in town. The comedy of the "Golden Farmer" and the farce of "The Irish Attorney," was the bill. The actors made a hit from the start, and the applause was tremendous. The company lasted about six months, and during that time they gave one performance a week. A partial list of the plays presented is as follows: The Golden Farmer, Toodles, Charles II, Charles XII, Perfection, Mesmerism, Spectre Bridegroom, and Venice Preserved.

The Lyceum was the first hall in this city that contained scenery and was adapted for theatrical purposes. As there was no room for flats, the scenes were all on curtains painted on both sides, and which were turned around when a change was needed.

The footlights, of course, were kerosene lamps, and when a night scene was required, one of the company came out and turned them down one by one. The Carbondale Brass Band was the orchestra. Merritt Wilson, constable of the First ward, was doorkeeper, and the admission was one and two shillings. Their most elaborate production was the five act tragedy, "Venice Preserved" which the company rehearsed nightly in the printing office of the *Carbondale Transcript* of which Mr. Reynolds was editor.

THE FIRST STRIKE.

Sixty years ago or about 1840, C. P. Wurts came to this city and for a time was a member of the D. & H. canal Co.'s engineer corps. He was the nephew and adopted son of John



ARCHIBALD LAW,
First Mining Engineer, D. & H. C. Co.